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Men Provide Care to Relatives Also: Primary Care Practice Sheet #6

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Men Provide Care to Relatives Also Primary Care Fact Sheet #6

Men may face different issues and concerns than women when caring for a loved one.

Today men are increasingly finding themselves in the position of caring for a loved one. By understanding the special issues that face male caregivers you will be able to play an active role in caring for yourself as well as for your loved one.

Important principles to remember

- Men, like women, are capable of providing excellent and safe care to their loved ones.
- Men who provide care do so within a society that often looks upon caregiving as “women's work”.
- Some male caregivers may face discrimination or feel overlooked by traditional caregiver services.

Special concerns for men

- Many male caregivers do not seek services or outside help with their caregiving.
- Male caregivers are often faced with learning new tasks and responsibilities when they take on caregiving responsibilities.
- Male caregivers may feel lonely, isolated, hopeless or experience a sense of losing control when a loved one becomes ill.
- Male caregivers may experience more health problems than men who do not provide care.

Important questions to ask

- Are you taking care of your own needs?
- What kinds of activities help you handle stress?
- Do you ever feel overwhelmed, hopeless, or depressed?
- Do you feel comfortable with asking for assistance if needed?
- Do you know where you can go to get caregiving assistance?
- Do you have a trusted friend or relative that you can turn to if you feeling overwhelmed?

PRIMARY CARE PRACTICE TIP

Many male caregivers often escape the attention of their physician because they may not readily talk about their caregiving experiences. However, as a primary care provider you play an important role in recognizing caregiver stress. Use this valuable opportunity for discussion of the impact of being a male caregiver. If you are not aware of local resources for caregivers, your Area Agency on Aging is a great source of that information. Encourage your patients to learn more about resources available to them.

**For more information call your Area Agency on Aging
1-877-353-3771**

Maine Primary Partners in Caregiving is a joint project of the Eastern Agency on Aging and the University of Maine Center on Aging, in partnership with Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, Eastern Maine Medical Center, Horizons Health Service, Indian Township Tribal Health Center, Norumbega Medical, Rosscare, and Senior Spectrum.